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ABSTRACT

The authors propose research to test the hypotheses that external or basic factors influence the joining process in organizations, and that internal psychological factors are major determinants of the staying process. They hypothesize that pay, company policy, peer relationships, and working conditions are basic motivators external to the individual and act to attract a worker to a job or push him out of one. Internal psychological factors, such as favorable climate, permissiveness, challenge, and equity, are factors that influence job satisfaction and serve as staying motivators. (RA)

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EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS AFFECTING THE JOINING AND STAYING PROCESS WITHIN ORGANIZATIONS

Occasional Report

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External and Internal Motivational Factors Affecting the Joining and Staying Process within Organizations

What factors are present and operative to cause a person to join and/or stay in an organization? The host of social and industrial psychologists who have studied this aspect of personal behavior within organizations have revealed and catagorized long lists of factors which contribute positively and negatively to these two particular questions. The concern for the studies of job satisfaction, job attitudes, increased productivity, motivation and many other areas relating to personnel dynamics and humar relations, is admirable indeed and necessary for effective operation of today's organizations.

It is understood that the people who direct the destinies of the country's industrial firms and educational institutions pay much attention to these studies. However, the degree to which the findings are actually integrated into policies will be reflected in the turnover rates and the data concerning production efficiency. Many companies and institutions are prone to pay more attention to the factors which the authors consider to be external in nature. In this examination let us say that external factors are those which appeal to the animalistic side of the worker's personality; the body comfort needs of adequate food, clothing, housing, clean place to work, rest periods during the work day, division of the work load, retirement plans, insurance plans and other benefits appealing only to the basic needs. Fewer companies pay more than lip service to the factors which the author wishes to call internal factors which allow for the psychological satisfactions and inner needs of the worker.

The authors' specific hypothesis concerns the so-called external versus internal factors, and offers the idea that external or basic factors influence the "joining" process while internal psychological factors are the major determinants of the "staying" process.

Different types of factors affect the attitudes, feelings and outlook of workers. Let us consider workers who contemplate joining organization B; for example, if worker #1 contemplates joining organization B, then we could consider his reasons for leaving organization A. In that the whole process is cyclical in nature, we must choose a starting point from which to proceed. Let us choose the joining of organization B as the starting point and look at his possible reasons for joining.

Since it is obvious that the worker must believe that organization B will satisfy his needs better than organization A did, we can look at some of the causes for dissatisfaction with organization A and assume that he finds the negatives of one to be positive in the other - or at least that the negatives of the second are of lesser magnitude. Some gain has to be in evidence to preserve any kind of logic for making a move. Workers, as with other things in nature, tend to remain at rest until acted upon by a force. In living organisms, the force can come from without or from within - external or internal.

Herzberg, in his book, "Job Attitudes: Review Research and Opinion", 1957, lists several characteristics of dissatisfied workers.

1. Age.

   Morale is lowest among workers in their late 20's and early 30's. The fact that workers tend to be restless during the first few years of employment seems consistent with the following characteristic -

2. Length of Service.

   Seventeen studies indicated that during the first eight years, job

satisfaction tended to be high. For the next five years, morale and satisfaction were at the lowest ebb. After this period, workers tended to be more satisfied with their work.

3. Sex.

Women, although they were more variable than men because of duality of personal roles, were generally more satisfied than men.

4. Education & Intelligence.

Seventeen studies indicated that morale is lower among the better educated.

5. Personality & Adjustment.

A. Dissatisfaction is usually connected with some kind of maladjustment.

B. Dissatisfied people are less friendly - show evidence of nervous disorders.

C. Dissatisfied people find it difficult to adjust to arbitrary rules and regulations.

D. Satisfied people are more flexible - will adjust or leave.

E. Dissatisfied people usually have unrealistic aspirations and this limits their psychological flexibility. They aspire to job levels beyond their capability and are consequently and continually disappointed.

6. Occupation, Income, Position.

A. Higher level occupations breed higher morale among members.

B. Job dissatisfaction relates directly to income level. While the amount is unimportant, the comparative level and rate is very important.

C. Low responsibility jobs are low morale jobs.

7. Work History.

"Jumpers" are often dissatisfied people who carry poor attitudes

around with them.

8. Social Class.

Morale and job satisfaction increased as job level increased - decreased as worker was placed in work below his class.

9. Ethnic Groups.

Types of jobs were responsible for the levels of satisfaction. Foreign or negro workers who had broken the job barriers and held good paying, interesting jobs were highly satisfied. In general the majority groups exhibited high morale while minority groups were less satisfied in their work.

We can see and understand that job satisfaction and morale can be a powerful force in the decision to move from one organization to another. Choosing the applicable motives in each case would involve more space than we have time to fill, however, with some degree of accuracy we can say that although the decision to separate from one organization is made for psychological reasons, these reasons may never come to light through any verbalization of the worker. He actually quits for reasons which bear upon a group of internal factors, yet through pride or ignorance, gives as his justification, reasons which bear only upon clearly defined external factors of dissatisfaction. For instance, the worker may deplore the lack of opportunity for personal growth and the satisfaction which comes with recognition, yet he says to all around him, "the pay is lousy", or "I hate shift work".

For these or similar basic reasons he leaves one job and takes another. Each time this happens, the worker is convinced that his lot will be better than before. He has no opportunity to look beyond the concrete factors when joining an organization. He doesn't really know if the all important satisfaction factors are present within the walk of his new

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work home. He will discover these as he goes along, make comparisions judgements and either stay or again move on.

Business organizations are generally and notoriously self-centered or profit centered. Relatively few have begun to feel the need for expert advice regarding the institution of policies or programs which are aimed at providing for the inner satisfactions of their workers. The research done in the past twenty years has been recognized only partially by employers both large and small. As a case in point, we refer to the constant bickering which goes on between management and labor through union activity. If the workers basic needs are met, including pay, internal policies, chances for advancement, retirement, etc., and if steps are taken to satisfy his psychological needs, perhaps fewer strikes would result. It would appear that while unions fight for the improvement of working conditions they concern themselves with external factors. Seldom, if ever, does a union negotiate for the improvement of human relations, job satisfaction or the opportunity for its members to feel accepted, wanted, appreciated or, in general, good about their work. Union activity may very well originate for reasons which bear upon internal factors, but demands are always expressed in terms which bear upon external factors, Herzberg feels that the elimination of complaints causing dissatisfaction will do nothing to increase satisfaction. His declaration that different factors produce satisfaction and dissatisfaction means that while one set of factors may be attended to, the other remains unchanged as far as the worker is concerned. It is the authors' conclusion, then, that the several factors which prompt a worker to join an organization more or less remain dormant during the tenure of the worker. The worker stays with the organization because of internal factors.

What are these internal factors which cause a worker to stay in an organization regardless of some negative external factors?

Vroom, 1966, says that a work role most conductive to job satisfaction appears to be one which provides for high pay, substantial promotional opportunities (indicating appreciation) considerate and participative supervision, an opportunity to interact with one's peers, varied duties (absence of monotony) and a high degree of control over work methods and work pace. He goes on to say that people's reports of their satisfaction with their jobs provide them with such rewarding outcomes as pay, variety in stimulation, consideration from their supervisor, a high probability of promotion, close interaction with co-workers, an opportunity to influence decisions which have future effects on them, and control over their pace of work. Furthermore, individual differences in motives seem to have the effects predicted in the proposition. The more a person reports valuing these outcomes, the greater the positive effect on his job satisfaction of an increase in the extent to which it is provided by his job. In his summary of job satisfaction and behavior, Vroom also says that there is a consistent negative relationship between job satisfaction and the probability of resignation.

Sayles, 1964, states that in any hierarchial organization, one of the most important questions of a subordinate is, "How am I doing?" The subordinate needs reassurance that both he and his work are approved by his boss. He also wants to add to his understanding of how the system works, so that his environment will be a rational, predictable, and consistent structure.

H. Y. Bassett, in his article "Motivating Managers: Some Non-Financial Incentives", lists almost exactly the same internal factors which we have already examined.

Favorable Climate includes tolerance of errors which are bound to be made on occasion. Permissiveness, allows for contributions to be made by workers, and thereby generates valuable ideas and enthusiasm. Challenge is the opportunity for freedom to try new ideas for the common good. Equity is the idea that the "company" never gives anyone a square deal - rather it is the people of the company, its managers and supervisors who do that in everyday contact with workers. He concludes by saying that fairness is a morale builder without equal.

A report by the French Delegation to the Organization for European Economic Cooperation titled "Human Relations in the Firm," does much to reinforce the positions of others in the field as it states that" - - most of the obstacles reported involved psychological, economic, social and political considerations". The delegation feels that most seminars which attack the problem of job dissatisfaction do so on psychological grounds and economic grounds without regard for social and political aspects of the situation.

In Katz & Kahn, The Social Psychology of Organizations, p. 369, there is a table which shows the amount and sources of job satisfaction as related to occupational status. In this table, all levels of workers are catagorized as professional, skilled, semi-skilled or unskilled. The remarkable thing to be noticed is that all across the board, by all the levels of workers, the reasons behind their liking their jobs fell into two predominant catagories. Approximately 52% reported ego satisfactions, and 25% mentioned both ego and extrinsic satisfactions as important in assessing their general morale levels.

It is interesting to note that, through a progression of tables and charts listing bases for organizational effectiveness as the objective,

conditions became less external and more internal in nature, the more positive projected outcomes became. For instance, while the use of appropriate symbols of authority produces only minimally acceptable quality and quanity of work, the sharing of organizational decisions and rewards was found to produce spontaneous and innovative behavior, increased productivity, and reduced absenteeism and turnover.

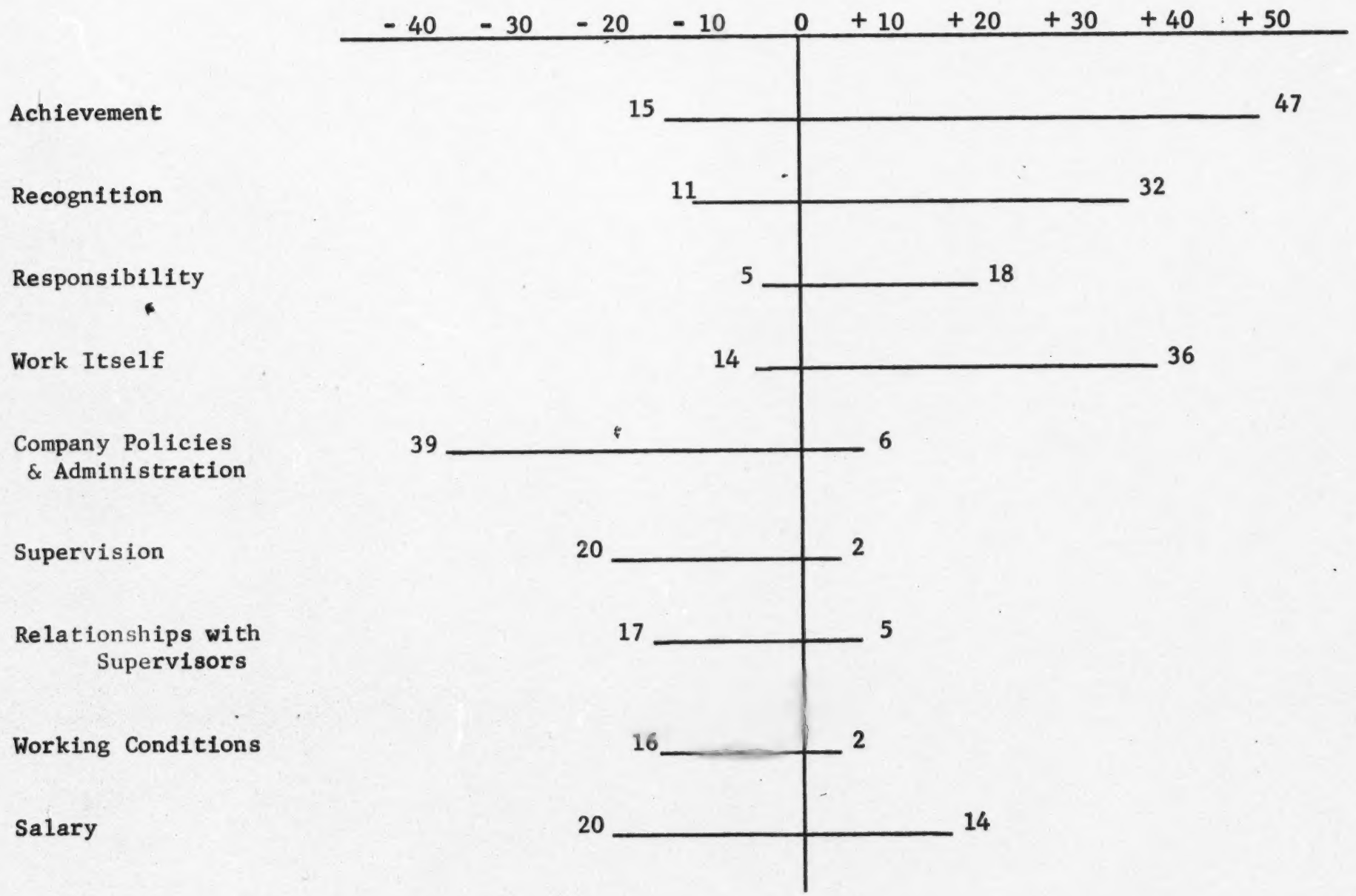
Vroom, 1964, states that if we assume that measures of job satisfaction reflect the balance of the job to its occupant, then it follows that job satisfaction would be related to the strength of the force on the person to remain in his job. The more satisfied a worker, the stronger the force on him to remain in his job and the less probability of his leaving it voluntarily (p. 175).

Herzberg's study, which isolated factors which he calls hygiene factors and motivator factors, deals mostly with the question of why workers stay or leave a job situation. It is difficult to find references to the question of why workers stay in or leave a job situation and also difficult to find references to the question of why workers join organizations. Perhaps little needs to be said regarding factors affecting the joining process because of the obviousness of the answer. Workers join for negative or positive reasons - to escape from the anxieties of a former position, or to accept monetary or status gain. The factors which push a worker out of one job into another may be, according to our scale of factors, either external or internal. The facts discovered by Herzberg, that company policies, supervision, relationships with supervisors and peers, and working conditions constitute the most often reported factors of dissatisfaction seem to correspond with our external factors - factors which act upon the worker. His motivators, on the other hand correspond to our internal factors in that

they act within the worker. It remains for us to apply these two types of factors to the topic at hand - joining and staying.

In seventeen diagrams in his book, "Work and the Nature of Man", Herzberg supports his theory that satisfaction and dissatisfaction rely on different factors. Figure 1 is a composite of the several predominant factors represented in his book. It supports the claim that hygiene or external factors represent the environment to which man constantly tries to adjust, and that none are valid contributors to psychological satisfaction or growth. These workers who are motivated in the direction of external factors are prone to be restless, are often dissapointed, and therefore change jobs for superficial, unsatisfactory reasons. Conversely, those who seek pay growth and consider factors which are more internal will tend to join organizations which provide opportunities for such growth and remain on the job regardless of a few relatively insignificant negative external factors.

FIGURE 1. - COMPOSITE VALUE DIAGRAM OF MOTIVATION FACTORS



Source: Herzberg, Frederic, Work and the Nature of Man, 1966.

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The research necessary to confirm the authors' hypothesis that external factors of job satisfaction are joining motivators, while internal factors are staying motivators could be undertaken using the model of Herzbergs' study with minor modifications.

While he asked about emotional highs and lows, this study could ask specifically for information concerning joining and staying.

A study of job leavers versus job stayers could be done which would compare:

1. Statements of leavers as to their reasons for leaving the organization.
2. Statements of new employees as to their reasons for joining that organization.
3. Statements of employees w/10+ years seniority regarding their reasons for joining the organization in the first place.
4. Statements of employees w/10+ years seniority regarding their reasons for staying with the organization.

It is believed that what would emerge from such a study would be:

Catagory I. 90% of those whose reasons for leaving were largely based on internal factors would say that they left one organization and joined another for external reasons.

Catagory II. Those who left an organization for purely external reasons would list only external reasons for joining another organization.

Catagory III. Those who stay in an organization would list the psychological factors most often when describing their reasons for staying.

While such a study would be as subjective as Herzberg's, and would probably gather much information which would be impure and not clean cut, it is believed that the general hypothesis could be supported if the sample were large enough to include all possible types of workers, from professionals to unskilled. The authors see no reason why the question could not be answered with a high degree of validity and reliability.

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